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ABSTRACT

Traditionally left out of the mainstream of higher education, blue collar workers and low paid white collar workers are beginning to enroll in college. Among the factors contributing to the drive for college education for workers are: (1) a shift in the composition of the work force; (2) increasing skill requirements in many occupations; (3) rising income levels of unionized workers; (4) new constituencies of union membership; (5) new and increased demands on union leaders. The needs and goals of blue collar and low paid white collar workers are significantly different from the needs of the middle class youths and adults who constitute the usual college student body. They are apt to have less self-confidence as learners than other adults, and tend to opt for courses directly related to their everyday life and work. Community and junior colleges are natural allies for this new and emerging challenge in higher education. Their tradition of community service and close links to the working world equip them to job-related instruction, and give them a head start in meeting the educational needs of working people. This document outlines some of the labor-based programs currently available in the community colleges, and charts the course for the future. (Author/NHM)

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ORGANIZED LABOR AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Report of the
AACJC–UAW–AFL-CIO Assembly
December 8-10, 1975, Washington, D.C.

American Association of Community and Junior Colleges

JC 760 359

Acknowledgements

This report reflects not only a specific conference but also a continuing dialogue between AACJC, UAW, and AFL-CIO on how community colleges and labor unions may work together to extend educational opportunity to more union members and their families.

The dialogue began more than a year ago with a smaller meeting at Solidarity House in Detroit. The past year included a major address at the AACJC convention by Leonard Woodcock, president of UAW International.

We are indebted to the U. S. Office of Education, Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education, for financial assistance with the data collection and writing, that went into the background paper and the writing and publication of this conference report.

The cooperation of Walter Davis, director, Education Department, AFL-CIO, and Carroll Hutton, director, Education Department, UAW, has made this dialogue possible. We appreciate the contributions of all the participants in the meeting.

Roger Yarrington
Vice President, AACJC

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ORGANIZED LABOR AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Lois S. Gray

This paper will explore areas of labor-community college cooperation, survey jointly planned programs currently underway, and analyze problem areas.

Workers as College Students

Traditionally left out of the main stream of higher education, blue collar workers and low paid white collar workers are beginning to enroll in college. Among the factors contributing to the drive for college education for workers are:

(1) *A shift in the composition of the work force.* In this decade for the first time in world history, a majority of American workers are employed in occupations classified as "white collar" (office, clerical, and professional). Since white collar work tends to be associated with "middle class" status, employees in these occupations have traditionally valued formal education as an evidence of accomplishment and social prestige. Furthermore, upward mobility in white collar work is strongly linked to years of school completed.

(2) *Increasing skill requirements in many occupations.* Technological advances have raised the skill requirements for jobs in such fields as health care, printing, and the mechanical building trades. The result has been a shift in the mix of classroom and on-the-job training with greater emphasis on formal instruction.

(3) *Rising income levels of unionized workers.* A recent survey by the AFL-CIO reported that the average union family has an income of $14,000 per year and owns its own home. The American dream of education for the second generation is beginning to take hold with the first.

(4) *New constituencies of union membership.* In recent years the major growth sector of the American labor movement has been public employment for which educational credentials are essential to upward mobility. Furthermore, minorities, women, and young people add to the pressure for educational opportunity as an avenue to recognition in the union and on the job.

(5) *New and increased demands on union leadership.* As collective bargaining has become increasingly technical with a proliferation in the range of benefits negotiated, union officers find it necessary to master such subjects as economics, accounting, and labor law. With membership ethnically and occupationally diverse and influenced by communications from many competing sources, union officials also need skills in communication and an understanding of sociology and psychology. With increasing political involvement, they must be well grounded in the structure and functions of government and the art of politics. Their responsibility for analyzing the impact of technological change on employment calls for basic understanding of science. In short, union leadership is a profession which, like other professions in our society, calls for expertise which can be acquired not only through experience, but through education.[1]

All of these factors—economic, social, and institutional—have contributed to labor's growing interest in opportunities for higher education. It is important to note that the needs and goals of blue collar and low paid white collar workers are significantly different from the needs of the middle class youths and adults who constitute the usual college student body. They are apt to have less self-confidence as learners than other adults and tend to opt for courses of study directly related to their everyday life and work. A recent study found strong interest in continuing education among blue collar factory workers but concluded that providers of educational programs to this population need to be aware of their special needs and life styles.[2]

Labor Unions and Community Colleges

Community and junior colleges are natural allies for this new and emerging challenge in higher education. Their tradition of community service and their close links to the world of work equip them to provide relevant job-related instruction and give them a head start in meeting other educational needs of working people.

Nonetheless, in embarking on an uncharted course, college administrators need a compass or at least an experienced first mate. Unions which represent the majority of blue collar and a growing segment of white collar workers are equipped to serve this role in opening the doors of higher education to this new student body.

Union support for further education of working people is evidenced by the emergence of educational benefit plans as a new type of demand in collective bargaining negotiations. Currently it is estimated that more than $200,000,000 is potentially available for employee education benefits with the numbers covered by such contract clauses multiplying each year.[3]

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[1] *See Lois S. Gray, "Training of Labor Union Officials," in* Labor Law Journal, *August 1975 for development of this idea along with a description of efforts to provide professional training for union leadership.*

[2] *"The Learning Needs and Interests of Adult Blue Collar Workers," Peter B. Botsman, an extension publication of the New York State College of Human Ecology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 1975 (summary of a Cornell research study).*

[3] *See Herbert Levine, "Negotiating Educational Opportunities for Employees and Their Families" (paper given to the Histradrut in Israel), 1972.*

Knowledgeable observers have predicted that educational benefit plans will one day be as comprehensive in coverage as pension rights. Also underway are efforts by building trades unions to link apprenticeship training with related instruction leading to a college degree.

Responding to rising interest in higher education, there are several union sponsored college degree programs. The AFL-CIO Labor Studies Center, which carries out a year-round program of leadership training for union staff, now features an external degree in labor studies offered in cooperation with Antioch College. In New York City, District Council 37, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), set up its own in-house institution of higher education (with a branch of The College of New Rochelle) to equip civil servants with the skills and knowledge required in competing for higher level jobs.

In meeting the educational needs of working adults, unions are turning to community colleges. Many unions are already engaged in cooperative programs. Notable has been the pioneering work of Carroll Hutton, education director of the United Autobile Workers,[4] who sees a national network of college credit programs as essential to reaping the gains of negotiated educational benefit plans. The AFL-CIO education department, under the leadership of Walter Davis, has encouraged and advised state and local affiliates in their efforts to build programs which are adaptive to the needs of union members. The International Union of Electrical Workers obtained a Labor Department grant to promote utilization of educational benefits at the local level, looking to community colleges as a major resource. Construction trades unions, building on their experience in collaboration with public schools in apprentice training, are turning to community colleges for training at a more advanced level. For example, Reese Hammond, Education and Research Director of the International Union of Operating Engineers, has developed dual enrollment programs which credit apprenticeship training toward an associate degree in more than twenty colleges throughout the country. In the health field, Local 1199 of the Drug and Hospital Workers Union has established a cooperative program with Hostos Community College (Bronx, New York), drawing on the resources of its employer financed training fund.

Colleges are responding to union overtures, not only out of a sense of social obligation to residents and taxpayers in the areas where they are located, but in recognition of this vast, largely untapped student potential which might offset declines in enrollments anticipated with a drop in population of traditional college age. A survey conducted by the University and College Labor Education Association three years ago indicated that 155 community and junior colleges were offering courses designed to reach union members.

Current Practices

To assess the current state of this new movement, labor-based programs in community colleges, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges circulated a questionnaire to presidents of affiliated institutions.[5] By the deadline date, 40 percent (366) had responded. Respondents came from all sections of the United States with southern states somewhat under-represented. Size of the responding institutions varied. Almost half reported a student enrollment in excess of 3000. One in five had more than 10,000 students and 30 percent had enrollments between 3000 and 9999; 28 percent between 1000 and 2999; the remainder (23 percent), less than 1000. A majority of these institutions are heavily involved in adult education; 55 percent reported that more than half their students were over age 21.

The survey reveals a high degree of interest in developing educational programs for union members. Four out of five college presidents responded positively to this idea.[6] On the other hand, many lack knowledge concerning unions and union practices. Approximately half of the presidents did not know (or did not report) the number of union members in the area served by their institutions, nor were they able to list the names of leading unions. The same proportion (about half) were not familiar with union negotiated educational benefit plans and whether such benefits are available to working people in their areas. Most institutions (two-thirds) were unable to report the number of students receiving tuition reimbursement from their employers. Many college presidents made explicit their lack of knowledge about how to contact unions and lay the "necessary political groundwork" for union-college cooperation.

Nonetheless, a substantial number of labor oriented programs are already underway. The vast majority of reporting colleges (80 percent) have already developed programs on request of employers and more than half (53 percent) have responded to requests from unions.[7] Programs developed with labor and management cooperation are strongly work oriented (occupational and technical), but many include offerings relating to union participation and leadership.

- Occupational Education (reported by 72 percent of the colleges)
- Leadership Courses (56 percent)

[4] *For a history of UAW efforts in this field, see "Objectives, Proposals, Policies, and Guidelines" (UAW Education Department, Detroit, Michigan).*

[5] *Of the 1200 community and junior colleges in the United States, 914 are affiliated with AACJC.*

[6] *It is reasonable to assume that presidents who responded are those most interested in union-community college cooperation; therefore, this high positive response to collaborate may not be representative of the total population of colleges.*

[7] *In occupational education, including apprenticeship training, the request may come from both union and employer.*

- Apprenticeship Training (48 percent)
- Preretirement Education (20 percent)
- Labor Studies (17 percent)

Other labor-based programs listed include safety education and public employment. Several community colleges have received federal grants to provide education on the newly enacted Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), e.g., La Guardia Community College in New York City. The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges is coordinating a national community college training program under contract with OSHA.

Most of these course offerings carry college credit. However, accreditation is more common for occupational (78 percent) and apprenticeship programs (70 percent) than for labor studies (50 percent) and preretirement education (15 percent).

Approximately 2 in 5 of the responding colleges offer courses in labor relations and about one-third of these (a total of 45) link the courses to an associate degree in labor relations. While in some cases these courses appear to be designed for supervisory or management personnel, most are oriented toward labor leadership.

Labor Studies as a Community College Major

Labor studies degree programs, designed specifically for union members, are a rapidly growing sector of the higher education scene. A separate survey (conducted by the author for the University and College Labor Education Association) found 47 labor studies degree programs underway in 16 states with many others in planning. Most of these programs are offered by community colleges. Students are typically part-time; almost all are union members and over 25 years of age. Curriculum usually includes courses in collective bargaining, labor history, union administration, labor law, along with insights from the social sciences relevant to union leadership and understanding of the union's role in society. Where labor studies course offerings constitute a major, this concentration accounts for one-fourth to two-thirds of the required credits toward a degree. Generally speaking, community colleges have not, as yet, created labor studies departments. Labor course offerings come from existing departments of social studies, occupational education, and business.

Almost all of the colleges offering labor studies are available on an open admissions basis. While nontraditional in this respect and innovative in subject matter (compared with traditional community college offerings), they tend to be traditional in degree structure. Few allow credit for knowledge acquired through experience or provide for the completion of course requirements outside the classroom mode. Almost all evaluate student progress with traditional letter grades.

All of the existing labor studies degree programs in community colleges are at least partly supported by tax dollars. Therefore, tuition rates are relatively low, ranging from zero in several California locations, and four dollars in Texas to $18 per credit hour in Kentucky. Typically, tuition provides one third of the financial support.

Labor Advisory Committees

In the history of labor involvement with higher education, unions have consistently demanded, as a price for cooperation, the establishment of a machinery for union officer participation in educational decision making.[8] The University and College Labor Education Association (UCLEA), representing the experience of long established centers in this field, recommends that any educational institution offering services to labor union members establish a labor advisory committee.

In response to the AACJC survey, a majority of community colleges (59 percent) reported union representation on boards of directors and/or advisory committees. Almost all of those with labor studies degree programs have established labor committees. These committees help to recruit labor students and mobilize political support for funding from city, county, and state government. In tight budget years, this support is often decisive. In addition, labor advisory committees guide the administration in planning curriculum, selecting faculty, and adapting degrees structure and format (including time and place of course offerings and tuition rates) to the needs of union members. It is, therefore, important that advisory committees be representative of major unions in the area served by the college and that union representation selected to serve on these committees be actively interested and involved in the program, not merely public relations figureheads.[9]

Concerns of College Administrators

Many college presidents reacted to the prospect of working with unions by expressing apprehension about *community and employer reaction* along with fear of unreasonable union demands. Others, particularly those with experience, were positive about the idea but concerned with problems of implementation—recruiting students, selecting faculty, structuring curriculum, designing course materials, securing financial support, providing supportive tutorial and counseling services, and finding jobs for graduates.

Viewing the union as a "special interest group," some see a conflict between college commitment to serve all of the community and perceived demands of a particular segment with specialized interests and a partisan point of view. A few anticipate resistance at the state or local level, citing anti-union bias. Also

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[8] *See Irving Kerrison,* Workers Education at the University Level *(New Brunswick), Rutgers University Press, 1951 for a history of early efforts to achieve collaboration between unions and institutions of higher education; and Lois S. Gray, "The American Way in Labor Education,"* Industrial Relations, *February, 1966, for a description of union-university conflicts and their resolutions.*

[9] *See paper by Herbert A. Levine on "Union-University and Inter-University Cooperation in Workers Education in the U.S.A." (International Labour Office, Geneva, 1973) for guidelines to functions of university labor education committees.*

of concern is how the program would work in practice, e.g., will it be possible to maintain a balance between union and management viewpoints? Will union demands conflict with academic independence in curriculum planning? Do programs restricted to union members (for example, apprentices) undermine open admissions policies or contravene affirmative action legal requirements?

Among colleges with ongoing labor programs, problems most frequently encountered are *recruiting*, funding, and staffing. Since these programs are relatively new, they have, with few exceptions, reached a fraction of the potential market. Administrators are understandably concerned about whether new programs will recruit sufficient enrollment to fill FTE (fulltime equivalent student enrollment) quotas which justify continuing funding from state and local governments. As one community college program director expressed it, "The labor group is a very unique target group that requires non-standard channels of communication."

Selection of faculty is another critical issue. Whether to retool faculty from social sciences, humanities, and business administration departments or to recruit new instructors with labor experience is a critical issue. The Academic Policy Committee of the UCLEA recommends that labor studies degree programs be headed by at least one fulltime experienced labor education specialist and that labor experience be a criteria for selection of instructors. One community college program faced a labor boycott when it announced a series of labor classes taught by an instructor with an anti-union reputation. Others have failed to attract students because course offerings appeared to be "academic" and instructors lacked expertise in labor subjects and rapport with the local labor community.

The UCLEA survey of labor studies degree programs revealed that most institutions take into account practical experience as well as academic credentials in selecting instructors. This pattern is also characteristic of occupational education, including apprentice training. In many cases, union officials serve as adjunct (part-time) instructors.

Finding suitable course materials is a major problem. Texts are normally written for students who enroll in college directly from high school. Rarely do texts, even in such applied subjects as collective bargaining and union administration, draw on the work experience of the students. As labor programs expand to new areas where experienced labor educators are in short supply, there is an increasing need for specially designed texts and supplementary reading materials for this new student population. Even in apprenticeship training, for which there is a longer established body of experience, college administrators express the need for standardized texts and course materials.

Counseling, tutoring, and remedial education are required services for students who have been away from formal education for a period of years. Open admissions programs, even for young students with recent high school experience, have above average dropout rates and working adults have even more serious difficulties in meeting college standards. Experience shows that student retention rates vary directly with the availability of backup services.

In considering inauguration of a labor studies program, college administrators frequently ask: What is the market for the graduates? What *career opportunities* are available to those who take these courses? These are difficult questions to answer. Union officials are usually selected or elected from the ranks of the membership based on their record of contribution to the organization. While further education may be expected to contribute to effectiveness on the job and in the union, there can be no guarantee of upward mobility as a direct result of formal education. It is too early to evaluate the impact of college education in labor studies.

A Carnegie-funded study of Cornell's Labor Studies Two-Year Certificate Program yields a few clues. A high percentage of graduates reported assuming greater responsibility in their unions, a form of recognition which they attributed to skills and knowledge acquired through this course[10] of study. Some moved into government, community, and a few into management positions utilizing the certificate as an aid to changing careers.

Perhaps most critical of all concerns at this point in time is worry about *financial support*. Colleges considering new programs with labor cooperation hesitate to make the commitment in light of anticipated cutbacks in appropriations. And even those with labor programs underway fear that this new type of offering will be considered marginal when funds are tight. One reassurring note, based on the experience of university labor progress, is the efficacy of union political support in competing for public funds. Adding another constituency may be decisive in a budget crunch.

Union Concerns About College Cooperation

Union officials, while increasingly interested in collaborating with educational institutions, have a heritage of suspicion of intellectuals and a skepticism about the ability of educators to adapt to the real world. They look for tailor-made programs, a voice in decision-making, flexibility in format, streamlined requirements, and innovative approaches. Unions, like business, agriculture, and other organized groups seeking educational services, want *programs which are responsive to their special needs*. They want a curriculum which builds on the work and union experience of their members and which deals with subjects required for more effective performance of job and union responsibilities. This requires a needs assessment prior to course announcement. They expect course design and instruction to be *relevant to their*

[10] *University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School, "The Labor-Liberal Arts Program of NYSSILR and the D.C. 37 Campus of New Rochelle."*

everyday concerns. They expect a *voice in decision-making* through representation in an advisory committee with real, rather than perfunctory, functions. To be worked out through mutual agreement are such questions as course content, selection of faculty and materials, and evaluation of results.[11] In return for this voice, unions are willing to carry responsibility for recruiting students, publicity, serving as guest lecturers, and promoting financial support from public funds. In addition, many unions make available tuition support for member students through scholarships funded from union treasuries or, as noted above, through union negotiated educational benefit funds.

Flexibility in design and format is expected. Colleges must consider whether instruction can be offered at hours convenient to working adults, including weekends, and in places easily accessible, e.g., work sites or union halls.

With the drive for accreditation of labor programs comes pressure to *streamline degree requirements.* Ideally, from the union point of view, colleges should recognize knowledge acquired through experience when it can be demonstrated that it is the equivalent of knowledge normally transmitted by college instruction. This idea is basic to dual enrollment apprentice programs. In labor studies experience, credit is granted by several institutions—the AFL-CIO Labor Studies Center-Antioch College, Empire State College's Labor Division, D.C. 37-The College of New Rochelle, and Florida International University. So far it has not caught hold in community college labor studies programs. One of the barriers is lack of know-how on how to evaluate experience for credit. Carnegie Corporation is currently engaged in a study which may provide guidelines.

Above all, labor programs call for *innovative nontraditional thinking.* Instructive is the record of Wayne State University's Weekend College. Launched two years ago on a shoestring, this college currently enrolls 3400 students, all working adults, mostly union members. Phenomenal growth is a product of the nontraditional innovative approach of its director, Otto Feinstein. Curriculum draws from the liberal arts but focuses on issues of concern to working union members in an urban setting. Classes are offered in union halls and much of the instruction takes place by television, making it possible to study at home and near work in a compatible setting. Credit for experience is built-in, streamlining progress toward a degree. Most students receive financial support from veterans benefits or union negotiated educational benefit plans. Wayne State has resolved the recruiting and support problems faced by most labor program administrators.

Assistance Needed

Community college presidents, while expressing interest in developing programs with labor cooperation, indicate that they would like assistance. Financial assistance may be required for startup costs. It is not clear whether new programs will be self-supporting in terms of tuition payments; whether they can be absorbed into existing structures and carried from existing resources, or whether they will generate additional appropriations through broadening the base of public support. Their funding is a major area of concern.

As already indicated, about half lack knowledge about and presumably contacts with unions in their areas. Therefore, it is not surprising that they ask for assistance in acquiring manpower information and conducting needs assessment surveys. Recognizing the need to recruit union representatives for service on college committees and boards of directors, colleges seek guidelines for selection of committee members. In addition, both the experienced and the inexperienced look for model programs and appropriate instructional materials.

Sources of Help

Fortunately, there are a number of resources available to community colleges interested in developing labor programs. The AFL-CIO education department staff is available to provide guidance on program structure and contacts with local labor leaders.[12] Many international union education departments are also willing to help. The UAW Education Department, for example, not only makes available staff time for planning and organizing new programs, but has prepared a handbook with guidelines for establishment of labor studies programs, along with a collection of course outlines and suggested reading materials.[13]

Another source of help is the UCLEA [14] which has established an academic policy committee for this very purpose—i.e., to recommend guidelines and provide advisory service to educational institutions entering this field. Many university labor education centers are already involved with community colleges in active programs of labor education. Relationships vary from advice on curriculum and assistance with labor contacts to cosponsorship of educational programs. For example, the University of California (Berkeley) Labor Center has developed a network of labor studies degree offerings in cooperation with community colleges in the San Francisco Bay area (Merritt, San Jose, and San Francisco City Colleges) in which the Labor Center provides direction to curriculum planning, faculty for many of the course of-

[11] *UAW, op. cit., p. 10, lists recommended functions of a labor advisory committee.*

[12] *Contact Walter Davis, Director, AFL-CIO Education Department, 816-16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.*

[13] *Ibid (may be obtained from UAW Education Department, 8006 East Jefferson Street, Detroit, Michigan).*

[14] *Contact George Boyle, President, UCLEA, University of Missouri, Labor Education Program, 1004 Elm Street, Columbia, Missouri 65201).*

ferings, and funding from a Ford Foundation grant. Rutgers, Cornell, Iowa State, Connecticut, and Michigan State are also cooperating with community colleges in a variety of labor programs.

Through these sources, AFL-CIO international union education departments and the UCLEA, a corps of professional labor educators, may be enlisted to advise and assist in planning new programs.

Summary

Labor-community college cooperation is in an embryo stage of development. Much better established are programs of cooperation with business and industry. Guidelines for working with unions may, in part, be derived from experience with business. Also relevant is the history of cooperation between agriculture and the land-grant colleges in cooperative extension.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are the advantages of community college cooperation with labor unions? What are the risks? What have colleges done to capitalize on the advantages and avoid the risks?
2. What are the most effective structures for labor programs? In what department should such programs be located? How should they be staffed, e.g., should the director have labor experience?
3. How should a community college go about ascertaining the educational needs and interests of working adults?
4. What should be the functions of a labor advisory committee? How should the committee be selected?
5. How can these programs be financed? How should funds be obtained: state and local funds; foundation and government grants; veterans benefits; educational benefit plans.
6. How can national and local resources be most effectively utilized?
7. What can we learn from the experience of university labor education centers and Cooperative Extension in terms of formulating guidelines for educational collaboration with action groups?
8. Should there be a national coordinating structure for:

   referrals?
   advice on programs?
   dissemination of course outlines and materials?
   exchange of experience?

   If so, how should this be organized and financed?

NATURAL ALLIES—

ORGANIZED LABOR AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES: A REPORT ON THE ASSEMBLY

Dale G. Brickner

The site was the Washington, D.C. headquarters of the AFL-CIO; the conferees represented broad segments of the organized labor movement and the community college system; the subject was the nature of the evolving relationship between consumers and suppliers of post-secondary education. As the dialogue unfolded, it became evident that these three days in December, 1975 could well be a landmark episode; a turning point in the traditional conception of delivery systems appropriate to American labor education.

Altogether the conference involved 14 presidents and administrators from community colleges, sponsored by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. Another 17 conferees came from the AFL-CIO Department of Education and the education departments of its affiliated national and international unions. The United Auto Workers was represented by 4 members of its national and regional education staffs. Although these three organizations provided the impetus and focus for the conference, additional inputs were provided by representatives from the University and College Labor Education Association; the Joint Council on Economic Education; the American Council on Education; the National Institute of Education; the U.S. Department of Labor, and the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education.

The subject matter of the conference was clearly defined by its planners, but the theme emerged unpremeditated from a statement made by Lois Gray in her background paper. After analyzing the changing character of the American workforce and its changing educational needs, Gray observed:

> Community and junior colleges are natural allies (of labor unions) for this new and emerging challenge in higher education. Their tradition of community service and their close links to the world of work equip them to provide relevent job related instruction and give them a head start in meeting other educational needs of working people.

The concept of a natural alliance between organized labor and community colleges quickly captured the imagination of the conferees, and the ensuing discussions developed a general outline of the dimensions of this relationship. An alliance is clearly not a love affair; the dialogue was unfailingly candid, sometimes tough. Educators and unionists alike delineated their priorities and prerogatives. Through it all, however, the ally relationship repeatedly reemerged in the consensus logic of an educational system which meets the needs of workers as union leaders, as community leaders, and as politically responsive citizens.

Dale G. Brickner is associate director, School of Labor and Industrial Relations, Michigan State University.

Education and the Labor Movement

Walter Davis, Education Director, AFL-CIO, discussed "The Development of Education Interests of the Labor Movement." His comments are paraphrased as follows.[1]

The keystone of AFL-CIO educational policy is its continuing support for free public education from kindergarten through four years of college. The education department assists in implementing this policy through the federation's affiliated unions. One of the tangible results of this emphasis has been the election and appointment of union members to school boards as well as to college and university boards of trustees.

In labor education, the AFL-CIO national education department and state central bodies support an extensive summer school program, and a continuing issues education program aimed at developing political awareness among its members. Six years ago, the AFL-CIO Labor Studies Center began operations as a staff training institute, and has since developed an external degree program in cooperation with Antioch College. In the longrun, the Labor Studies Center hopes to develop into a graduate school of labor studies.

Operationally, the Education Department has a materials development program, a film division, a speakers' bureau, and an intern program which trains and places labor educators.

The initial interest of the AFL-CIO in the community college system was related to the fact that both public and private four-year institutions had priced themselves out of the market for most children of working class families. Community colleges were supported by the AFL-CIO and its affiliates because they offered an economical alternative source of post-secondary educational opportunities.

A number of factors contributed to the AFL-CIO interest in newly developing labor studies programs at community colleges:

- Affiliate organizations became involved in developing and promoting programs at the local level, and began to raise questions about the orientation and quality of some of these programs.
- The inevitable side effect of such programs in tax-supported institutions is felt in the legislative proc-

[1] *To conserve both time and space, statements of speakers are paraphrased rather than quoted directly. Errors of interpretation may be attributed to the reporter's faulty notes, his cheap tape recorder, or his inherent biases.*

ess, where the AFL-CIO functions effectively in support of its national and state programs.

• AFL-CIO interests are not limited to the quality of life on the job, but extend to the quality of life in the community. In community functions, academic credentials are held in some esteem—generally without justification—and union members therefore need educational opportunities to function effectively.

• One of the agonizing facts of modern life is economic illiteracy among the American people. The AFL-CIO looks upon labor studies programs in community colleges as still another avenue for solving this problem.

• Community colleges are also involved in apprenticeship programs, which are a significant concern of a number of occupational and skill-oriented affiliates. The AFL-CIO interacts in this area only to the extent that affiliates seek its assistance in supporting legislative action.

Overall, the AFL-CIO has a substantial stake in the impact of educational institutions on its members and the children of its members. In the context of this conference, it is a primary objective to establish a more formal and continuing relationship with community colleges; a vehicle of communication through which the concerns of the AFL-CIO and its affiliate organizations can be transmitted to the educational community.

Findings of a Survey

Lois Gray of Cornell University talked on "Recent Survey Findings: Community College—Labor Union Cooperation," [2]

Community college administrators expressed concern about the following aspects of labor studies programs:

• Will they jeopardize traditional sources of support in the community, and among business groups?

• If labor advisory committees are established, who will control the program? The college or the client group? What implications are there for academic freedom of curriculum development and instructor selection?

With respect to the foregoing two issues, it was noted that community colleges with operating programs did not perceive these as significant problems. Similarly, well established university-based programs have generally been able to solve problems arising in these areas.

• How can labor studies programs be put into effect? Can extensive recruiting campaigns be justified? How much union cooperation can be expected?

• Are qualified staff persons available? How can they be recruited? How can instructors be oriented to specifically union issues?

• Are appropriate teaching materials available?

• Should an open enrollment policy prevail? What tutoring and counseling services have to be provided?

• Is there a market for graduates of labor studies programs? What are the expectations of students relative to employment and advancement?

• Can such programs be justified in light of increasingly tight budgets in higher education?

From the perspective of unionists, the most often expressed concerns focused on the following questions:

• Are community college people like all other eggheads? Do they understand labor's problems? Can they develop relevant curricula?

• Can traditional degree requirements be streamlined to meet the special needs of workers?

• Are qualified teachers available? Do community college administrators understand that a "qualified instructor" is one without a management bias?

To find answers to these questions, unions and community colleges must show a willingness to experiment. Specifically, they must establish and carefully evaluate pilot programs in labor studies credit instruction.

Commentary

Educator: Assuming cooperation at the national level, how is this made effective with labor groups at the local level?

Gray: The AFL-CIO will make referrals through its state organizations and major affiliates. The UAW has regional education staff that can be contacted. Where a state university program exists, its director can be contacted for assistance.

Labor: Teaching labor education courses, such as collective bargaining and labor history, requires special sensitivity to union policy and goals. Are community colleges really prepared to give more than lip service to the role of advisory committees? Are community colleges willing to work with labor education centers in major universities, which have established expertise? The evidence really isn't very convincing that community colleges generally understand what workers' education is all about.

Gray: Advisory committees certainly must not be a public relations device; they must play an active role in the evolution of programs, just as they did in the evolution of university labor education centers.

Educator: Our experience shows that labor advisory committees are effective in the community college setting.

Labor: Community colleges must make a commitment to hire a competent director of labor studies, who can interpret the labor movement to the college and vice versa.

Tuition Refunds

Herbert Levine, Director, Labor Education Center, Rutgers University, addressed the Assembly on "Recent Findings on Tuition Refunds for Union Members."

Although the labor movement has supported free public education through four years of college, its

[2] *Because Dr. Gray's paper is printed as part of the report of this conference, the main elements of her survey finding are not repeated here. This report focuses primarily on identified problem areas and participant commentary.*

objectives have not been attained because of the opposition of other groups in society. As was the case with other benefit plans—pensions, health and accident insurance, and unemployment compensation—labor has gone to the bargaining table when the legislative process has been unproductive. On the educational front, unions have developed a wide variety of programs.

- **Educational Leave:** In 1967, an incomplete survey by the Department of Labor showed 1.5 million workers covered. The actual figure today is probably close to 7.5 million.
- **Apprentice Training:** American apprenticeship training is the best in the world, and it is controlled and administered by unions. Negotiations have produced substantial training funds, for example, 15-17 cents per hour for plumbers and 30 cents per hour in the maritime industry. Uncounted millions are spent on in-plant programs by major corporations.
- **Tuition Refunds:** Although there are other collectively bargained plans, the UAW programs with major auto producers are most notable. They began in 1964 with a $250 per person refund, and a relatively narrow scope of applicability. Today the plans pay up to $700 per person per year on a broader based concept of relevant courses. For General Motors alone, this is an obligated benefit worth $200 million annually. Unfortunately, only about one-half of one percent of all blue collar workers take advantage of such programs.
- **Educational and Cultural Trust Funds:** Since the Taft-Hartley Act was amended in 1969, educational and cultural trust funds have mushroomed, particularly in the building trades. This is the most promising area of educational benefits for union members, because the funds can be used for a nearly limitless variety of programs for workers, their spouses and children.

What are the implications of taking education to the bargaining table? Community colleges, as well as other educational institutions, can develop a system or systems for using these funds. Such systems, however, must be operated in good faith, because workers have been cheated by the educational enterprise for 20 years and more.

- It is not enough to write up or rearrange a few courses and call it a labor studies program.
- Workers must be given credit for grievance handling and collective bargaining, just as others have been given credit for accounting and marketing.
- Public institutions must make an investment if they want to obtain money from bargained education plans. They must hire competent faculty; establish an advisory committee to develop a dialogue on course content; and place students when they earn a degree.

Finally, educators must learn that the name of the game is developing educated carpenters, *not* educated supervisors of carpenters. Workers have a right to be educated workers; they have already paid for it in time and taxes.

Commentary

Labor: It's only a very elite group of unions that have tuition refund programs, and educational and cultural funds. How do the rest of us get these benefits?

Levine: You have to work at it. Sit down with knowledgeable people and work up a plan that can be put on the bargaining table. Keep taking it back to the table until you get it.

Edmund Gleazer, President, AACJC, suggested that Jerry Miller of the American Council on Education comment on some related programs.

Miller: There is now more elasticity in the crediting and credentialing system than there has been in the past. The ACE, building on its experience with recommending crediting for military training, is developing systems for similar evaluations of instruction offered by non-collegiate sponsors. The system involves ACE assembling an evaluation team, composed of subject matter specialists at the college level, which makes recommendations as to the credit-equivalent of specific programs. This serves as a basis for awarding students college credit for education received from non-collegiate organizations.

- A joint project is presently under way with the New York State Board of Regents to establish a national system of crediting.
- Consideration is being given to devising a system for evaluating and giving credit for apprenticeship programs. This system could be expanded to include labor studies courses offered by unions to their members.
- The Carnegie Corporation has funded a task force to review credit and credentialing systems in post-secondary education.

Problem Areas

Carroll Hutton, Education Director, United Auto Workers Union, spoke of "Problem Areas in Community College-Labor Union Cooperation."

Although the current depression has adversely affected American workers, particularly auto workers, the thrust of labor education has not been blunted and has, in fact, shown new sources of strength. This trend is clearly evident in a number of developments within the UAW education program.

- There has been a 10-15% increase in participation by women and minority groups.
- About 85% of all UAW members are covered by educational leave policies.
- Tuition refund programs, which were initially applicable to job-related education, are gradually being liberalized to cover general education.
- UAW President Leonard Woodcock has endorsed the concept of paid work sabbaticals, which could have a significant impact if combined with tuition refund programs.
- There has been an expansion of programs with university labor education centers, despite cutbacks in other areas of educational funding.

There are a number of areas, however, where unions and academics should be making greater progress.

- Unions should refine what they know about labor studies programs, and organize it in a form usable by community colleges.
- Both unions and universities with labor education programs should cooperate more effectively with community colleges, and provide professional services for developing programs.
- There is a nearly limitless field for the development of effective teaching materials for labor studies courses.
- Counseling and remedial programs for labor studies students must be further developed and refined.
- Recruitment of students in labor studies is a tough problem, but it can be done successfully. Further study is needed to develop useful techniques.
- Greater progress must be made in developing systems for giving credit for experience, and credit for previous non-credit instruction.

Finally, it must be noted that labor advisory committees are the keystone of successful labor studies programs in community colleges. Colleges can establish industrial relations programs with labor and management committees, but unions will not offer the same level of support. Historically, institutions of higher education have spent untold millions training for business and industry. Organized labor has an equal need for programs specifically designed for its officers and members. Such programs can evolve successfully only where labor has effective input through an advisory committee structure.

Commentary

Labor: Unions need a higher level of commitment from colleges. We don't want a spinoff from the business school, or a bunch of existing courses pasted into a so-called labor studies curriculum.

Educator: How stable will these programs be if they are largely built on soft money, for example, the G.I. Bill, tuition refund, and negotiated trust funds?

Labor: Greater consideration should be given to dual degree programs. All workers are not interested in a labor studies degree, but may want to combine it with apprenticeship education.

College Interests and Concerns

Edmund J. Gleazer, Jr., President, AACJC, voiced "Community College Interests and Concerns."

The modern community college grew out of a number of forces. It was conceived in the notion that junior colleges could provide the first two years of post-secondary general education, and thus leave to universities more specialized areas of education. This concept was subsequently joined with the technical institute function, which prepared people for specific occupations. A third line of expansion evolved through service programs.

These developmental components came together in the late 1950's when states began to face up to a potential crisis in higher education generated by the baby boom and increased educational aspirations flowing from the post-war experience with the G.I. Bill. Thus the big boom in community colleges came in the early 1960's. The keynote of this expansion was an educational system that attracted more students, and more kinds of students, than anyone expected. Community colleges pursued an open door policy, and became deeply involved in taking education out of a formal structure and into the community. It emphasized local involvement and participation, and it used community facilities and human resources.

The community college is an educational resource center—an educational utility—for the taxpayers who support it. Community-based programs begin with community needs, not with a textbook and an instructor's notes. This philosophy has led to phenomenal success and spectacular growth. But it is also encountering problems in the current economic climate.

- Expansion of educational opportunities costs money, and government funding is getting increasingly tight.
- For the first time, students may have to be turned away, and decisions may have to be made about who will be served.
- There may be a tendency to shift the focus of decision-making from the local to the state level. Community decisions cannot be made effectively at a state capitol.

Whatever the current problems may be, community colleges would like to work with unions, following the same broad concepts they have found successful in meeting other local educational needs. Such a commitment may require in-service staff development to meet the type of challenge presented by a labor studies program. But the concept of the educational resource center can be effectively applied to the needs of labor.

Commentary

Educator: What are the needs of labor? It's embarrassing to find out that we have not developed programs for unions before this. Should we be developing programs in addition to labor studies? Programs to meet other needs of labor?

Labor: Concentrate on labor studies. Workers will satisfy personal needs in other aspects of the community college program.

Educator: The receptivity of the community to labor studies is changing and improving. There are also marked improvements in advisory committee relationships. At first, relations were uncomfortable; now they are very cooperative. These things have to grow and develop on the basis of experience in individual communities.

OSHA Project

Carole Sturgis, Project Director, AACJC, reported on the AACJC OSHA project.

AACJC was designated by the Department of Labor as the administrative agency for a $900,000 first

year grant to develop occupational safety and health training programs through community colleges. Initially 20 schools were involved, and they provided eight to twelve hours of safety and health training for 48,000 persons.

The current grant of $1.2 million will be used by 26 schools. In 24 of these colleges, there are labor representatives on the safety and health advisory committees. The grant targets two groups for concentrated training efforts: (1) firms with safety records poorer than the national average; (2) small and medium-sized firms, i.e., fewer than 1,000 employees. In addition, the current grant provides funds for demonstration projects at two schools, one in Florida and one in Illinois, on consultative services for occupational safety and health. These schools will make available to local employers the services of trained staff to carry out safety and health inspections. These consultants will submit a report on identified hazards and recommend remedies. Although such inspections will not supplant OSHA functions, the program does offer an opportunity to assess problems and initiate remedial action without incurring fines and other penalties.

Discussion of Issues

Carroll Hutton and Edmund Gleazer, moderated a discussion of the issues.

Hutton: The extended discussion we had on the OSHA project comes down to one thing: Is there effective union input at the point where these programs are implemented? Where participation isn't effective, unions themselves must take a share of responsibility. Often we induce our people to get involved without giving them proper training and orientation.

Educator: When a program is only in the thinking stage, where do we go to get help in identifying labor groups which should be invited to participate?

Hutton: Both Walter Davis (AFL-CIO) and I can provide information on the concentration of union membership in an area. In most cases, we can identify specific individuals who should be involved.

Educator: Most community college programs are in states which have labor education programs at one or more universities. This situation raises the question of where resources are going to go. We should set up cooperative systems, rather than competing systems. This conference and other labor studies projects undertaken by AACJC should have university input. Probably 90% of the problems that community colleges are facing in this area have already been encountered by university programs. For example, the key labor leaders in a community are probably a matter of experience and record in university programs. Most university program directors will share this information if asked. Finally, it should be noted that the educational thrust generated at community colleges must be fulfilled at the university, particularly in terms of transfer credit. This factor alone suggests even more strongly the need for community colleges to cooperate with university programs.

Gleazer: This statement strikes a nerve, because it contains an element of paternalism. The problem community colleges have had with universities is the "Big Brother" attitude. "Big Brother" has been there before; knows how it's done; and will tell us how to do it. We are certainly willing to acknowledge that universities are a resource. But if we are going to solve these problems, it has to be done as a team in which a peer relationship exists among the members.

Educator: I would like to hear a fuller explanation of why blue collar workers are not taking advantage of tuition refund plans.

Hutton: The 1973 statistic was about 1 percent blue collar and 10 percent white collar. Since that time, changes have taken place which probably improved participation. A significant factor is the lack of relevant programming; courses haven't met the needs and desires of working people. That's one among many reasons.

Educator: Workers probably have a marked lack of confidence in their ability to reenter the educational system successfully. Developing a method for giving credit for previous non-credit and non-collegiate work may be an important confidence builder.

Educator: We also have a responsibility to locate programs where working people feel comfortable, for example, in community facilities and union halls.

Labor: Tuition refund use is just part of the overall recruiting problem. Working people often remember schooling as a negative experience. In addition, unions have failed to identify career opportunities and advancement paths open to workers who enter these programs. Labor groups should generate more information on these issues.

Tour of the AFL-CIO Labor Studies Center

The Tuesday evening session of the conference was held on the 47-acre campus of the AFL-CIO Labor Studies Center in Silver Spring, Maryland. This facility, once an Xaverian College, was acquired by the AFL-CIO in 1971, and following extensive renovation, was dedicated in November, 1974.

Fred Hoehler, the Center's executive director, and members of the staff, briefed the conferees on the educational programs offered at the facility. Except for two-week institutes for new union staff personnel, programming is done in a one-week format. Subject matter includes leadership skills; major issues, e.g., economic directions and international affairs; staff training institutes in arbitration, civil rights, labor law and related subjects; and special programs for building trades representatives and editors of labor publications. The Center's facilities are also used for conferences of AFL-CIO departments, and affiliated unions.

Review and Comment

Daniel Crowder, President, West Virginia Northern Community College, summarized and commented on the first day's discussions. His comments are paraphrased as follows,

There are five main points that should be made with respect to the issues raised in the discussion of community college involvement in workers' education.

1. There is no doubt that what community colleges are doing in this area is right and good and proper and should be done. The obligation to provide equal rights and opportunities for all extends to services for the working class; and it does not end at 18 years of age but continues through a lifetime. It is appalling that workers express concern for stepping on the toes of big universities, which have traditionally shown little interest in workers' needs. Hopefully, community colleges will effectively challenge the concept that the only relevant education is liberal arts education. In fact, education should be directed toward a lifetime commitment to enhancing the community life of workers.

2. Community colleges are not competing with universities. They can't, because universities are not doing very much. When unions ask the universities for a course, the typical response is a one-shot noncredit program. Usually the university extension people like to keep it as quiet as possible, so it won't upset their academic colleagues.

3. Although the natural ally concept has been challenged at several points during the discussion, it has basic validity. Both unions and community colleges are committed to the principle of equal educational opportunity for all. We have been beguiled and deceived by the traditional establishment in higher education, which serves 5 per cent of the population. We should turn the educational system around so it also serves the other 95 percent.

4. The problems discussed during the conference can be overcome. It is only natural that new ventures will generate concerns. However, the issues that divide labor and community colleges are few and insignificant relative to the wide area of common interest.

5. If labor and community colleges join forces to solve the problems of educational opportunity for all people, it will be an unparalleled breakthrough in American higher education. Universal education for a better life for all people is a basic right that must be pursued.

Finally, it should be noted that this change in emphasis need not involve enormous additional expenditures; most of it could be done by shifting resources. We are presently spending excessive amounts for exotic projects, and the training of people for jobs that don't exist. Probably half the money committed to higher education could be better spent. The present emphasis must be reevaluated.

Recommendations

Walter Davis, Edmund Gleazer, and Carroll Hutton on the final morning of the conference led a discussion devoted to formulating a series of recommendations, and to reviewing a detailed document on implementing concepts. The five recommendations set forth below were explicitly deemed to be the consensus of the conferees, and not policy positions of the sponsoring organizations.

1. We recommend that community colleges seek ways to work cooperatively with labor organizations on credit programs in labor studies, preretirement education, apprenticeship, job training and retraining, and general education programs for union members and their families.

2. We recommend that labor education programs be recognized as having social value equal to more traditional programs which prepare persons for management positions in business and industry.

3. We recommend that community colleges seeking to develop programs for labor constituencies do so with the guidance of advisory committees representative of the local organized labor movement; and, further, that community colleges be encouraged to employ instructors with a labor union background.

4. We recommend that the AACJC, at least on an interim basis, operate a national labor studies resource center to collect and disseminate information on programs, teaching materials and related matters; and act as an employment referral center for community colleges and professional personnel in labor studies.

5. We recommend that the dialogue between representatives of community colleges and labor organizations, begun at Solidarity House in 1974 and renewed at AFL-CIO headquarters in 1975, be continued to help define further the ways in which educational institutions may better meet the needs of union members and their families.[4]

Thus the conference ended on the note of continuing dialogue. Certainly the participants had aired a wide range of issues and concerns. In this respect alone, the conference achieved its primary objective; but the implementing resolutions also directed that the first steps be taken toward a more structured continuing relationship between community colleges and organized labor.

As something of an immediate response to the latter directive, the conference sponsors agreed to establish a steering committee, which will convene at least once before another general session is organized. In addition to consideration of substantive agenda items, this group will act on the invitation of Carroll Hutton to hold a third national conference in early November, 1976, at the Walter and May Reuther Family Education Center, Black Lake, Michigan.

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[4] *Reproduced in the appendix is a more detailed list of the conference results, which was discussed and amended by the participants. The conferees were indebted to Dr. Alban Reid, President, Black Hawk Community College, Illinois, for the preparation and refinement of this document.*

SUGGESTED OUTCOMES
LABOR UNION—COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSEMBLY

I. Define *potential* educational services for the labor movement:
   - A. Apprenticeship training
   - B. Labor studies for union leadership
   - C. General education opportunities for union members
   - D. Post-secondary educational opportunities for union families
   - E. Pre-retirement and post-retirement education
   - F. Orientation and training for women workers
   - G. Job entry training for minorities
   - H. Retraining for developing occupations
   - I. Upgrading skills for underemployed

II. Provide orientation seminars for labor union and community college leaders addressing:
   - A. Natural alliance of labor unions and community colleges
   - B. Concerns of college administrators and governing board members
   - C. Concerns of union officials

III. Identify *possible* strategies which might be utilized by community colleges for:
   - A. Assessing interests, needs and *desires* of union members and their families
   - B. Devising means to achieve liaison between union leaders and community college staff
   - C. Establishing advisory committees for apprenticeship and labor studies programs
   - D. Developing course materials
   - E. Providing ancillary services (counseling, tutoring, remedial and/or preparatory work)
   - F. Securing funding for programs
   - G. Selection of instructional staff
   - H. Recruiting students

IV. Identify and develop joint resources on a continuing basis to be available to labor unions and community colleges to aid in:
   - A. Assessing interests, needs, and desires
   - B. Establishing liaison with union leaders
   - C. Establishing advisory committees
   - D. Developing course materials
   - E. Providing ancillary services
   - F. Recruiting instructional staff
   - G. Recruiting students
   - H. Special consultant services

V. Identify a limited number of institutions with on-going programs to develop applicable models for the use of interested labor unions and community colleges.

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